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Excise

Excise revenue in the Ceded districts.

*261 Q.—Mr. A. PARASURAMA RAO: Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(a) how many shops were reduced after the Excise Advisory Committee was formed in each of the four Ceded districts; and what are the rentals the Government lost thereby;

(b) whether there were any shops newly started after the Excise Committees were formed and what is their rental value;

(c) whether it is a fact that generally the rental of the previous year is the upset price for the ensuing year; and

(d) whether the Government will be pleased to give a tabular statement of the Excise revenue of the Ceded districts for the last 5 years?

A.—(a) & (b) Information regarding the number of shops closed will be found in Statement B appended to the Excise Administration Reports. Regarding their rentals, the Government have not the information. They have called for a report.

(c) No. The upset price is fixed at the discretion of the selling officer. The previous year's rental is taken into consideration but is by no means the most important factor.

(d) The attention of the hon. Member is invited to the Imperial Return No. 1 appended to the Annual Excise Administration Reports which have been published.

Mr. A. PARASURAMA RAO:—"May I know if the report will be laid on the table after receipt."

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR:—"Yes."

Diwan Bahadur R. N. AROGYASWAMI MUDALIYAR:—"With reference to (c), may I ask the Government to increase these rentals progressively with a view to the ultimate attainment of the goal of prohibition?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR:—"That is one of the ways in which prohibition is said to have been worked out; how far this work is effective remains yet to be seen."

Diwan Bahadur R. N. AROGYASWAMI MUDALIYAR:—"May I know if that is the policy of the present Minister?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR:—"In that respect the policy of the Government has not been changed."

Mr. G. HARISARVOTTAMA RAO:—"What is the percentage of cases in which the upset price has been fixed lower than the last year's rentals during the last three years, if any?"

The hon. Mr. S. MUTHIAH MUDALIYAR:—"Notice."

Postponement of toddy sales by the Rajampet divisional officer.

*262 Q.—Mr. A. PARASURAMA RAO: Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that the Rajampet Divisional Officer postponed toddy sales because he did not get bidders according to his expectation;

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(b) whether there is any rule to the effect that unless certain prescribed amount is realized from excise auctions the sales must either be postponed or re-held; and

(c) whether the Government propose to make rules regarding the tapping and control of sweet juice?

A.—(a) The Government have not the information.

(b) The sales are in the first instance provisional and the Collector has power under condition V to accept or reject any bid at his discretion. If there is obvious combination and if no genuine bids are being received the selling officer may adjourn the sales.

(c) The necessary rules have already been made. The attention of the hon. Member is invited to the notification published on page 1207 of Part II of the *Fort St. George Gazette*, dated the 20th June 1916, and to the notification No. 211 published on pages 1170–71 of Part I of the *Fort St. George Gazette*, dated 31st July 1928.

Town-planning

Strengthening of the staff of the Town-planning department.

* 263 *Q.*—Mr. K. R. Karant: Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(a) whether any, and if so, what action has been taken in the light of the suggestions made by me on 26th March 1928, to strengthen the staff of the Town-planning department; and

(b) whether the department or the Government have any, and if so, what proposals thereto?

A.—(a) & (b) The matter is under the consideration of the Government.

Mr. K. R. Karant:—"May I ask the hon. Minister to expedite the consideration so that some effective steps might be taken before framing the next year's budget?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar:—"We have asked for proposals and we are expecting them."

Agriculture

Experiments in the eradication of prickly-pear.

*264 *Q.*—Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar: Will the hon. the Minister for Development be pleased to state the results of the experiments so far carried out for the eradication of prickly-pear?

A.—No experiments have been so far carried out for the eradication of prickly-pear.

Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar:—"Is the hon. Member aware that experiments have been carried on in connexion with the utilization of prickly-pear into manure?"

The hon. Mr. M. R. Seturatnam Ayyar:—"As it is, the question is not clear whether it refers to the Local Government or the Government of India or foreign countries."